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CLAIMS

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1. Apparatus for cutting sheet material, comprising a lower part (11) for placing below a piece of sheet material (23), an upper part (12) disposed above said lower part, a gap (13) between said upper and lower parts to receive said piece of sheet material, and a cutting blade (14) secured in said upper and lower parts and extending across said gap characterised in that pressure exerting means (22) are provided on one of the parts (11 or 12) in the gap (13) to bear on the other part (12 or 11), so that said piece of sheet material (23) can be inserted between the pressure exerting means (22) and the other part to tension the sheet material in the vicinity of the blade (14).

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2. Apparatus according to claim 1 characterised in that said cutting blade (14) or a holder and blade combination (18, 14) is the only mechanical connection between said upper and said lower parts, whereby there is no obstruction to free movement of the apparatus when engaged with a sheet.

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3. Apparatus according to claim 3 characterised in that said pressure exerting means comprises a freely rotatable wheel (22), positioned immediately in front of the blade (14).

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4. Apparatus according to any preceding claim characterised in that the upper face of said lower part (11) and the lower face of said upper part (12) are shaped to provide matching sinusoidal surfaces for support of the upper part and tensioning of the sheet.

5. Apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein a window (24) is provided in one part for viewing the sheet immediately in front of the blade (14).